Amateur Radio Newsline(tm) Report 1373 - December 5, 2003

Closed Circuit Advisory

This is a closed-circuit advisory, and is not for re-transmission.
Repeat, not for broadcast.

This is Andy Jarema, N6TCQ, Newsline Support Fund Administrator. As we move into the holiday season, we ask that you include Newsline on your list of giving. This is the first request we've made since April, and we'll be back in the following weeks to thank everyone that helped in that campaign. But with support in the months since that campaign only averaging between $200 and $250, and with our normal monthly expenses of between $600 and $800 each month to bring you the latest news on Amateur Radio, you can see where the math is headed.

The address for the Newsline Support Fund is Newsline, PO Box 660937, Arcadia, CA 91066. If you missed that, it will be given again at the end of today's newscast. And now the latest news:

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Amateur Radio Newsline report number 1373 with a release date of Friday, December 5, 2003 to follow in 5-4-3-2-1.

The following is a Q-S-T. Hams in space fail to show up for a highly publicized operating event while hams on the ground save a life. Find out the details on Amateur Radio Newsline report number 1373 coming your way right now.

(Billboard Cart Here)

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ON THE AIR: ISS ASTRO-HAMS A NO-SHOW FOR K6DUE COMMEMORATIVE EVENT.

What if you planned a party but your host never showed up to open the door and turn on the music. This is essentially what happened to the ARISS folks the weekend of November 29th and 30th in regard to the kickoff of its NA1SS special event tribute to the life of Roy Neal, K6DUE. But it was not completely unexpected. Amateur Radio Newsline's Norm Seeley, KI7UP, has the rest of the story:

The event was to get underway on Saturday, November 29th during as the space station passed over the US West Coast. ARISS International Chairman Frank Bauer, KA3HDO, says that Expedition 8 Commander Mike Foale, KB5UAC, had even been supplied with a list of potentially good radio passes and the frequencies where to call the I-S-S had been published world wide a few weeks ago. Stations on the ground were even asked to keep their Q-S-O's as brief as possible so that the greatest number of hams possible could make contact with the space travelers.

And so it was that hams world wide were ready to honor K6DUE by making contact with the station in space that his years of effort helped to create. But over the entire weekend there were no reports of voice contacts with either Foale or his crewmate Alex Kaleri, U8MIR. Nor was the RS0ISS automated packet robot station activated either.

Why the crew was a no-show remains a mystery. Frank Bauer is certain that Foale knew about the event. In fact a message was received from KB5UAC that said he would try to be on the air for about 2 passes each weekend of December for the event. Bauer also received confirmation that final information regarding this past weekend was uplinked to the ISS crew on Friday, November 28th.

Bauer says that ARISS has discussed the situation with NASA. He says that there are two events that could have kept Foale from getting on the air. The first revolves around a broken exercise treadmill that KB5UAC reportedly spent a lot of his own time fixing this past weekend. The other is the widely reported crushing noise heard by the crew last week. It was in the aft end of the Service Module and its possible that the crew might have gotten instructions from the Russian team to determine the cause. This is being checked out.

Either way, Bauer reminds everyone that last weekend was only the kickoff and that the event commemorating K6DUE's contributions to manned ham radio space operations and that the event continues through the end of the month. He also says that ARISS will alert the ham radio community of potential opportunities for contacts as they become available.

For the Amateur Radio Newsline, Norm Seeley, KI7UP, in Scottsdale, Arizona for the Amateur Radio Newsline.

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It should be noted that when it made the original announcement several weeks ago, ARISS said that crew participation in the event was completely contingent on the schedule of the on-orbit duties and other issues that might crop up on board the orbiting space station. (ARISS)

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RESCUE RADIO: LA HAMS ASSIST CARDIAC VICTIM

Ham radio has helped to save the life of one of its own. This, as members of a Southern California repeater respond to a users call for assistance. Amateur Radio Newsline's Mert Garlick, N6AWE, has the details:

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Almost every ham has heard of the Los Angeles 147.435 MHz repeater. Some call it notorious. Others have given it the nickname of "the animal farm" for the lack of discipline of its users. But on Sunday night, November 23rd, some of the tarnish turned to silver as bad manners gave way to human kindness and a life was saved.

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Elmer: "We were all sitting around and listening to the radio as we usually do in an evening. All of the sudden, an individual keyed up a microphone whom we were all aware was having some health problems. One of our listeners, Alan Sanchez, KC6QXA, immediately noticed the distress in this persons vloice. He keyed up the mic and asked if he was OK. He indicated he was having some difficulty breathing and needed help. So, Alan immediately called Faith Gonzales who said to call 911 immediately because she was also very familiar with thisd gentlemans health problems
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That's Gary Elmer is KG6DVO. He recently took over the system. And according to Elmer, the work of his users did not end there. While medical aid was in route, Mike Stavropoulos, KD6JTD, headed over to where the stricken ham lives. He helped him get up, opened the security gate for the paramedics and directed them to the apartment. Mike then followed the ambulance to the hospital and filled medics in on the hams condition.

Later that evening, the hospitalized ham went into cardiac arrest. He was revived by his doctors. Had he been at home the chances are that he would now be a silent key now.   Gary Elmer says that he is very proud of his users:

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Elmer: "You know we like to tear it up and cut up, and have a good time. And you know that some people might of the fun we have. And yes, we have been in trouble with the FCC, but you know, when called upon, we too can rise to the occasion as evidenced by the actions of those three amateurs the other night."

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As we go to air Elmer says that the ham is still in the hospital recovering. More important he is alive thanks to his friends on the Los Angeles 147.435 MHz repeater.

For the Amateur Radio Newsline, I'm Mert Garlick, N6AWE, also in the City of Angels.

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In past years the Los Angeles 4-3-5 repeater has received a lot of negative press. This time the press is positive because this time it and its users probably saved a life. (ARNewsline(tm))

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COORDINATION: REVISED SOCAL 2-METER BANDPLAN NEARING APPROVAL

Still in the Golden state, December 6th was the date set for a vote on a revised 2 Meter bandplan proposed by TASMA, Southern California's Two Meter Area Spectrum Management Association. Amateur Radio Newslines Bruce Tennant, K6PZW, gives us a sneak peak:

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Among the problems the revised bandplan seeks to correct is recognition of the work of neighboring coordination councils. TASMA has always officially acknowledged the Northern Amateur Relay Council of California, but not those serving the states of Arizona and Nevada. California shares borders and R-F with those states and the revised TASMA bandplan will provide for such political recognition.

Also to be considered will be frequency assignments for specific modes and updating the recognized manned space operations listings. This to conform the Southern California bandplan with the world in relation to current Amateur Radio International Space Station operations.

This revised plan is the product of 2 years of hard work by the regional coordination body written with significant input from the areas Amateur Radio community. It already received a thorough public review at the 2003 ARRL Southwestern Division Convention last September.

For the Amateur Radio Newsline, I'm Bruce Tennant, K6PZW, in Los Angeles.

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For more information please visit www.tasma.org. (TASMA, ARRL SW Commuinicator)

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Break 1

We are the Amateur Radio Newsline, heard on bulletin stations around the world including the W6JW repeater serving Santa Clarita California.

(5 sec pause here)

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RESTRUCTURING - SOUTH AFRICA: PROPOSED CHANGES TO LICENSE REQUIREMENTS AND PRIVILEGES

Another nation has taken the first steps in restructuring its Amateur Radio service. We have this report on what South Africa has done so far in welcoming codefree operations:

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South Africa is taking a look at how to handle the question of Morse code testing until such time as it goes away and it looks as if it has an answer. It comes in a proposal to lower the Morse requirement from 12 to 5 words per minute. That is until applicants for the South African Zed U license will no longer need be tested for proficiency in Morse code.

Also proposed is the introduction of a new license class with the

callsign prefix ZT. This license will not have any Morse code requirement. Rather, the holders of ZT licenses would have full VHF privileges and will be permitted to transmit with a maximum power output of 100 W on portions of the 160, 80, 40 and 15 meter bands.

For the Amateur Radio Newsline, I'm Ken Locke, N8PJN.

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This interim solution would hold in South Africa until a final disposition on the future of Morse testing is made by that nations telecommunications regulators. (Q-News)

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THE VEC PROGRAM: NEW GENERAL CLASS QUESTION POOL RELEASED

If you are planning to take a United States General Class written exam after next July 1st or know someone who is, then listen up. On and after that date tests will be based on a new set of questions just released by the Question Pool Committee of the National Conference of Volunteer Examiner Coordinators.

According to a news release from the committee, changeinclude the number of questions increased to 432 and release pf the pool in both Microsoft Word and ASCII text formats with no graphic files. Look for the new questions in cyberspace at www.arrl.org/arrlvec/pools.html. (W4WW, NCVEC)

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RADIO LAW: COMPLAINT LEVELS TO FCC RISE

The United States FCC has released a report on the inquiries and complaints processed by its Consumer & Governmental Affairs Bureau during the third quarter of 2003. According to the report complaint activity increased within all major areas except cable during the third quarter.

The largest increase occurred within Radio and Broadcasting where a total of 19,920 indecency and obscenity complaints were received. Complaint activity was also higher in all five top wireless categories, with the largest percentage increases coming in the service quality and equipment section. Its all in cyberspace at http://hraunfoss.fcc.gov/edocs_public/attachmatch/DOC-241435A1.doc (CGC)

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ENFORCEMENT: YET ANOTHER TOWER FINE

The fines for tower related violations continue. The latest is an $8000 fine issued to the Barinowski Investment Company, L P.   Barinowski is the owner of a tower located near Savannah, Georgia.   It was cited for failure to clean and repaint its antenna structure to maintain good visibility. (FCC)

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EMERGING TECHNOLOGY: NET-BY-PHONE NOW PLAYS MP3

The HandiHams say that there is now an MP3 file playback feature on the Net-By-Phone service that allows blind users who do not own a computer to access the Internet. This, by using a plain old vanilla telephone.

By way of example, a Net-By-Phone user accessing a website like Amateur Radio Newsline that has a link to an MP3 file can hear that file over the phone by simply selecting it. The system does not play the file right away, but it will download the file in the background and send you an e-mail when it is ready. When you retrieve the e-mail, the file will automatically play, just as a voice e-mail from a Net-By-Phone customer plays automatically.

Net-By-Phone is located in Chicago and is a fee based subscription service. You can find out more on the web at www.net-by-phone.com or call the toll free demonstration line at 1-800-358-7858. (HandiHams)

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HAM TRAINING: TRAIN THE TRAINER

49 youngsters are now licensed hams and are the newest members of Pennsylvania's Trinity High School Radio Club. This, thanks to a program called "Train the Trainer" by Pete Di Volpi, K3PD, a teacher named Sean Barnes, N3JQ and the Harrisburg Radio Amateurs Club V-E Team.

TheTrinity High School Radio Club operators station KB3JAG. Barnes started the radio club so lower classmen could get exposure to the hobby before they attend his physics class. He notes that the schools physics program and the principals of amateur radio teend to integrate very well.

The Harrisburg Radio Amateurs Club is a Special Services club in central Pennsylvania. It has only 100 members, but has seen over 100 new licensees produced in the last two years from their V-E and Train the Trainer programs. Teachers that are interested in Sean Barnes curriculum can e-mail him to SeanBarnesPolo@aol.com (W3UU, K3PD)

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HAMFESTS AND CONVENTIONS: FT.TUTHILL BECOMES WILLIAMS HAMFEST

The Ft. Tuthill Arizona hamfest has changed its name, its location and its date. Now the Williams Hamfest and ARRL Arizona State Convention, this premiere event will be held next July 2nd to the 4th, at the Williams Rodeo Grounds, Williams Arizona.

According to a news release from Mark Keshauer, N7KKQ, the move means that the hamfest sponsors can provide lower fees for tailgaters and campers, bigger spaces, a fireworks display and free admission. Most important, the famed Saturday night B-B-Q which is a staple of this show -- will continue.   Sorry, that's not free but is among the best feeds

found at any hamfest in the United States.

More information is on-line at www.arca-az.org/arca/images/press%20release (N7KKQ)

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HAMVENTION 2004: THE YEAR OF THE CONTACT

Hamvention planners have announced that the theme for 2004 will be the "Year of the Contact," and they are starting out by improving their own. Amateur Radio Newsline's Bill Pasternak, WA6ITF, has the details:

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According to Hamvention General Chairman Gary Des Combes, N-8-E-M-O, his team has been making numerous changes to the shows web site, This, so that things like exhibits, general admission ticket sales and Flea Market spaces can be handled on line and the necessary forms simply downloaded.

And yes, we did say Flea Market rather than Outside Exhibits. As regular listeners know, a number of years ago the Hamvention made the name change to Outside Exhibits. Only one problem. The ham radio public never bought in to that new upscale title.

Hams have always referred to the Hamvention Flea Market as -- well -- the Flea Market. So, taking a cue from the many radio amateurs who have responded to the Hamvention request for input, show planners have gone back to the future.   Des Combes says that as of now, the Flea Market is the Flea Market, once again.

Gary Des Combes tells Amateur Radio Newsline that this is only the first of a number of "Going Back to the Future" changes that the public has asked for and that they will get. In fact, "Going Back to the Future" will be a sub theme during Hamvention 2004.

The dates are next May 14th to the 16th. The location is the HARA Arena in Trotwood Ohio just outside the city of Dayton.

For the Amateur Radio Newsline, I'm Bill Pasternak, WA6ITF, reporting.

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Lots more information is on-line at www.hamvention.org. (Hamventionr)

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BREAK 2

This is ham radio news for today's radio amateur. From the United States of America, We are the Amateur Radio Newsline with links to the world from our only official website at www.arnewsline.org and being relayed by the volunteer services of the following radio amateur:

(5 sec pause here)

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HAMS HELPING: THE NORTH POLE NETWORK

The holiday season brings hams a great opportunity. What better way could there be to introduce hospitalized children and their families to the magic of Amateur Radio--and to spread holiday cheer--than to arrange to have Santa visit them via Amateur Radio? Newsline's Joe Moell, K0OV, tells us about the North Pole Network.

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Kids at Childrens Hospital of Orange County get holiday visits from clowns, carolers, firemen, baseball players and rock stars. But nobody is more welcome and anticipated than the ten Amateur Radio operators who arrive on the weekend just before Christmas. They come to establish a special ham radio link that makes it possible for patients to talk directly to the "real" Santa in his office next to the big toy workshop at the North Pole.

Members of the Hospital Disaster Support Communications System have been visiting children and adults in Orange County hospitals for over 25 years, and we think there's no better way than this to spread holiday cheer while showing our hobby in the best possible light.

Will your club be part of the North Pole network this year? If so, we have some suggestions for you. For instance, personalize each QSO. It would be easy to just put the mike in front of a little girl and instruct her to tell Santa her name and where she lives. But imagine how much better the QSO will be if Santa calls her by name right from the start. He's Santa Claus, so he should know! Before each year's North Pole Network session begins, the hospital therapists provide our North Pole station with the list of names for every room and bed, along with plenty of other tidbits about the kids that make good conversation starters for Santa.

You'll find lots of other hints for your best North Pole Network ever at our group's special Web site. The URL is long, but you can get to it with one click from the Hospital Disaster Support Communications System site at www.hdscs.org

The most important hint we have for you is: Don't miss the miracles. Every year, we have had at least one extra-special encounter that astonished families, staff and the hams. In a Santa QSO, children have spoken for the first time following brain trauma. Fevers have broken shortly after North Pole Network visits. A head injury patient started to eat after being encouraged to do so by Santa, and so forth. We don't know exactly how much the personal contact with Father Christmas has aided in patients' recoveries, but we are always grateful that our hobby can add a little joy and holiday spirit to patients and their families.

Again, the Web spot to visit is HDSCS.org, short for Hospital Disaster Support Communications System. From southern California, this is Joe Moell Kay-zero-Oscar-Victor for Amateur Radio Newsline.

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More on this and other ham radio holiday activities in the coming weeks. (K0OV, ARNewsline(tm))

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INTERNATIONAL - AUSTRALIA: VK2BVS HONORED BY VK PRIME MINISTER

Australia's Prime Minister John Howard and Foreign Minister Alexander Downer expresses gratitude for Australian ham radio training in developing countries. This, by way of a certificate sent to Sam Voron VK2BVS in which the Australian Government expresses its gratitude to Voron for a valued contribution towards assisting developing countries to reduce poverty and achieve sustainable development.

The honor was bestowed on Voron for the six months he spent in Somalia where he organized an Amateur Radio training course. In addition to Howard and Downer, the certificate was signed by Dr. Brendan Nelson who is a member of Australia's Parliamentary House of Representatives. (QRZ.COM)

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INTERNATIONAL - SWEDEN: NEW PAN-EUROPEN TV SHOW ON ITS WAY

Ham radio in Europe will soon have a TV show of its own. Jeramy Boot, G4NJH, is in Nottingham, the UK, with the rest of the story:

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The Swedish-based 'Club-TV' wishes to establish a monthly amateur radio magazine programme to be transmitted via digital satellite TV to most of Europe. Club-TV wants to cover all aspects of amateur radio and thinks there is a number of amateurs around Europe who can handle a video camera and edit the result.

Videos of 10 to 20 minutes would be perfect. There is no cost involved other than the tape as the broadcasts receive commercial sponsorship.

During the past year Club-TV has carried out a number of tests and broadcast a couple of programmes. The transmission is via the Sirius 2 satellite at 5 degrees East with a Symbol Rate of 6667 and FEC 1/2.

Jeramy boot, G4NJH.

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Jeramy says that inquiries go to Ben Jockert, SM6CKU, by e-mail to sm6cku@parabolic.se. (GB2RS)

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ON THE AIR: NEW VHF/UHF PROPAGATION BEACONS NEAR ATLANTA

Back in the United States, Gary Bailey, WA4IOB, invites VHF operators to listen for his new 2 meter and 70 centimeter beacons. The transmitter

are located in grid E M 73 near Snellville, Georgia about 25 miles east of Atlanta. The mode is CW on 144.285 MHz and 432.352 MHz with 2 watts output on each band. The 2 meter transmitter feeds a horizontal square loop. The 70-centimeter antenna is 4 half wave dipoles in a 90-degree horizontal quadrature configuration feedwith a 4-way power splitter. Both sign the call B B B W-A-4-I-O-B slash E M 73. Signal reports go to grb734@bellsouth.net   (VHF Reflector)

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DX

In D-X, LA5RIA will be active as JW5RIA from Bear Island until June of JW5RIA will operate on 160 to 6 metres CW, SSB and digital modes. Q-S-L as directed on the air. (RSGB)

Also, eight American operators are active from Christmas Island, East Kiribati, until the 7th of December. Call signs to listen for are T32MP, T32WW, and several others on all bands using all modes. They will have three stations with amplifiers and a large selection of antennas to pipe their signals worldwide. (RSGB)

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THAT FINAL ITEM: A KILLER RENEWAL

And finally this week, the story of a ham who might have a hard time attending a license renewal hearing. Thats because he is in jail. Amateur Radio Newsline's Don Wilbanks, AE5DW, has more:

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According to the ARRL Letter, the FCC has issued an Order to Show Cause to a Texas ham who is currently serving a 32-year prison sentence for the 1996 murder of his wife. The order released November 21st is the governments opening salvo in a hearing process that could end with the revocation of the Advanced class license of Roger Thomas Scaggs, W-5-E-B-C.

The FCC says that Scaggs' murder conviction raises very serious questions as to whether he possesses the requisite character qualifications to remain a Commission licensee. It also causes the agency to question whether his license should be revoked.

Scaggs is 64. He apparently was able to renew his ham ticket in the spring of 1998. This is the same year in which he was later convicted of murdering his wife. The FCC granted Scaggs' application for an administrative update. In this case, apparently a change of address from Austin to Gatesville, Texas.

The FCC only recently became aware of Scaggs' murder conviction, which could keep him behind bars at least until he's 75. Assuming that Scaggs indicates that he will appear for or be represented at a formal hearing, the FCC will follow up with a Hearing Designation Order.

The session itself will be held before an Administrative Law Judge and would consider evidence concerning the effect of Scaggs' felony conviction on his qualifications to remain an FCC licensee. If no action is taken Scaggs license will next expire in 2008.

For the Amateur Radio Newsline, I'm Don Wilbanks, AE5DW, in New Orleans.

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Scaggs was given the customary 30 days to let the FCC know whether he plans to appear at the hearing. (ARRL)

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NEWSCAST CLOSE

With thanks to Alan Labs, AMSAT, the ARRL, the CGC Communicator, CQ Magazine, the FCC, the Ohio Penn DX Bulletin, Radio Netherlands, Rain, the RSGB and Australia's Q-News, that's all from the Amateur Radio Newsline(tm). Our e-mail address is newsline @arnewsline.org. More information is available at Amateur Radio Newsline's(tm) only official website located at www.arnewsline.org. You can also write to us or support us at Amateur Radio Newsline(tm), P.O. Box 660937, Arcadia, California 91066.

For now, with Bill Pasternak, WA6ITF, at the editors desk, I'm Jim Meachen, ZL2BHF, saying 73 and we thank you for listening. Amateur Radio Newsline(tm) is Copyright 2003. All rights reserved.